

IN THE CLAIMS:

The following listing of claims replaces any earlier listing:

- 1-6. (canceled).
7. (currently amended) A method for user-adaptive dialog guidance for a speech dialog system, comprising repeating the following steps in each iteration of the method:
 - always initializing each [[a]] dialog step with a shortened prompt on the part of the speech dialog system independent of a user's expertise,
 - outputting the shortened prompt by the speech dialog system,
 - waiting by the speech dialog system for an utterance by a system user in response to the shortened prompt,
 - activating a speech recognition system in order to understand the utterance by the user, and
 - if a correct response is detected, proceeding to the next dialog step,
 - if an incorrect response is detected, outputting a detailed prompt, and
 - if no response is detected, outputting a detailed prompt.
8. (previously presented) The method as claimed in claim 7, wherein the shortened prompt occurs in the form of a short audible signal.
9. (previously presented) The method as claimed in claim 7, wherein if the system user repeatedly fails to make an utterance in response to the shortened prompt, the time period for the speech recognition timeout after which a detailed speech output occurs is shorted.
10. (previously presented) The method as claimed in claim 9,

wherein the time period for the speech recognition system timeout is shortened as the number of instances in which there is no utterance in response to the shortened prompt increases and occurs in a plurality of stages.

11. (previously presented) The method as claimed in claim 9, wherein if the system user already responds to the shortened prompt, the time period for the speech recognition system timeout is prolonged.
12. (previously presented) The method as claimed in claim 7, wherein the speech dialog system is configured in such a way that the system user can interrupt the outputting of the prompt by prematurely inputting a speech utterance.